

B V

811

.B37

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

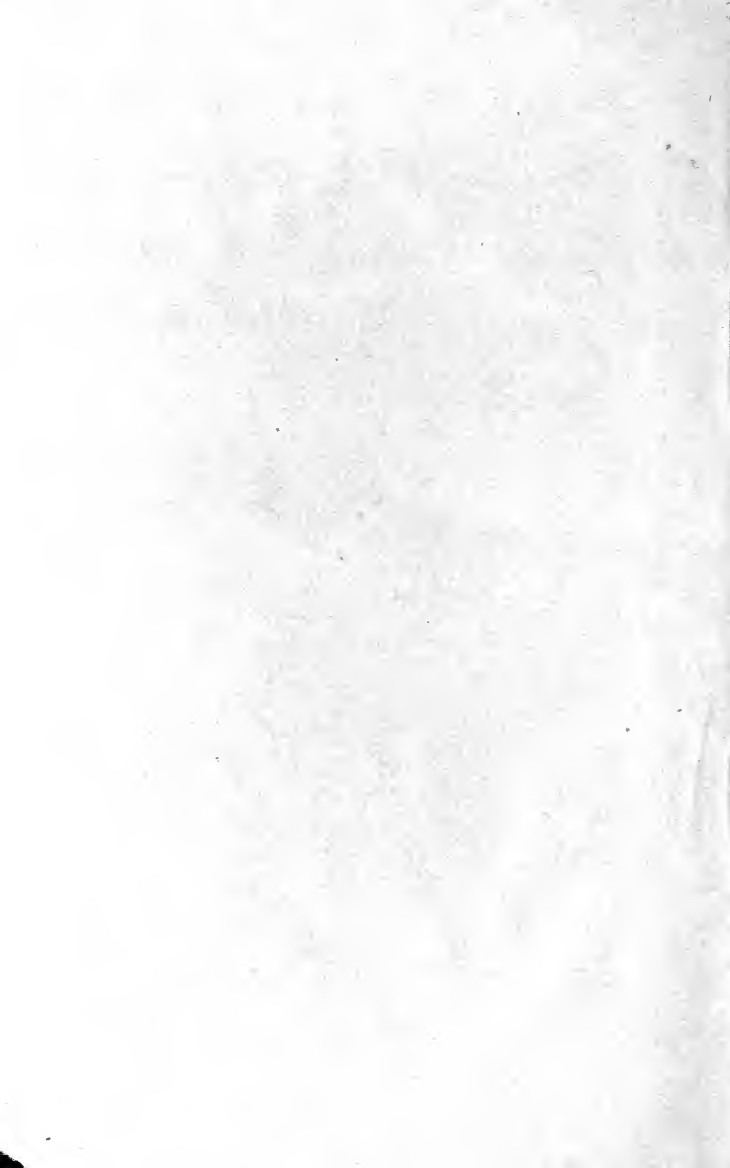
Library of Congress.

Chap. 13 1/8 11

Shelf 12 1/4

Copyright - Rm.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



No. 178 Entered Apr. 25th 1860

Deposited in the Office
of the District Clerk of
the District Court of the
U.S. for N. H. March 6. 1861.

~~Attest~~

Alceste R. Hale
Clerk

Mr. J. H. ...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...
...

Ms. No. 10/52
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

THE DUTY,

THE ACT, AND THE SUBJECTS.

By G. H. BALL,

PASTOR OF THE FREE BAPTIST CHURCH, BUFFALO, N. Y.



DOVER:

PUBLISHED BY THE FREEWILL BAPTIST PRINTING
ESTABLISHMENT.

WILLIAM BURR, PRINTER.

1860.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1860,
by "The Freewill Baptist Printing Establishment," in
the Clerk's Office of the District Court of New Hamp-
shire.

INTRODUCTION.

Religious controversy has its evils ; but they are trifling compared to those which pertain to indifference to the truth. Error is the parent of division and sectarianism ; and thorough, vigorous, persistent discussion is the only remedy for this evil, the only path to unity in truth. "Earnestly contend for the faith," is a Divine injunction. Truth never suffers in a fair contest. The strength of error is in concealment and quiet ; hence it deprecates discussion, shuns the light.

Honest men love to state their doctrine, and urge their reasons, and have them assailed, tried, tested by vigorous combat. As they love truth more than victory, they are glad to see every fallacy exposed, every false position demolished, every error confuted, that they may not suffer the great misfortune of believing and defending a lie.

Sharp discussion does not imply lack of brotherly love between the antagonists. Sometimes passion and bigotry embitters the feelings of the parties, but this is by no means a necessary consequence ; indeed, it is a positive defect in the discussion, and is a discredit to those who indulge in it.

In the following pages we have assailed Pedobaptism as best we could in the space allotted. We honestly believe the practice to be an error and an evil ; and if we could, we would destroy the faith of all persons in it, and lead them to the "one baptism" of the gospel. But while we are strongly set against this error of a large share of the Christian world, we are earnestly attached to the truth they do believe, and the virtues which they practice, and find ourselves bound to them by numerous brotherly ties, and are with them in the spirit of Christ, the labors of love, and fellowship of hearts.

Many of the best men this world has ever seen, believed and practiced the error against which we write ; many of our dearest Christian brethren with whom we delight to take sweet counsel in the Christian journey, now believe and practice it. We believe them honest, pious, friends to Christ, and lovers of men, and hence cherish
m as *our own brethren*, precious to us, and

precious to our Master ; and we protest against any interpretation of our language or arguments that shall limit, or cast the least shadow of doubt upon the sincerity and reality of this brotherly regard.

But the more earnestly we love them, and the truth which our common Lord has given to us, the more persistently, boldly, plainly, we feel bound to expose their error, and endeavor to bring them into the full unity of the gospel.

We are aware that the majority of the Christian world are Pedobaptists. The Papists, Lutherans, and the numerous smaller sects, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, &c., all adhere to this doctrine. So that, if the majority are right, we are wrong. But thus far the majority of men have been wrong ; and it is wholly unsafe to receive any doctrine as true because the multitude believe in it. It is worthy of inquiry whether all these Protestant sects did not derive this practice from the Papists, rather than from the gospel. Papists and Protestants are agreed in this rite, and it may be that the latter have accepted a Papal tradition, and are now perpetuating a Papal rite. The case deserves careful investigation.

Union among Christians can never be attained so long as this question is unsettled. If Pedo-

baptism is scriptural, infants are eligible to church membership, and the whole polity of the church must correspond to this fact. But if it is not Scriptural, then church membership is conditioned on the faith and obedience of the subject, and the church polity must conform to this fact. Many important things in church polity and Christian doctrine hang upon the question of Christian baptism. Hence, so long as Christians are not agreed on this point, they cannot unite on many others.

We pray for Christian union, and to this end we also write, that all may come to "the unity of the faith," "*One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.*"

INDEX.

	Page.
CHAP. I.—BAPTISM A DUTY, - - -	1
CHAP. II.—THE ACT OF BAPTISM, - - -	9
SEC. 1. Testimony of the Dictionaries, - -	13
“ 2. “ “ Encyclopædias, - -	17
“ 3. “ “ Church History, - -	19
“ 4. “ “ Greek Church, - -	21
“ 5. Scriptural Allusions to Baptism, - -	24
“ 6. Figurative use of Baptizo, - - -	26
“ 7. Conclusion, - - - - -	34
CHAP. III.—SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM, - - -	40
SEC. 1. Believers alone Commanded to be Baptized, - - - - -	42
“ 2. The Baptism of all others Forbidden, - -	45
“ 3. The Nature of Baptism renders it impossible for any others to be Baptized, -	51
“ 4. Pedobaptists declare their own Arguments to be Fallacious, - - -	57
“ 5. Infant Baptism a Violation of the Spirit and Letter of the New Covenant, -	62
“ 6. Objections and Arguments Considered, -	71
1. Circumcision. Fourteen Reasons against Baptism coming in the place of Circumcision, - - - - -	71

	Page.
SEC. 6. II. "All Children of Abraham," - -	74
III. Christ called Little Children to Him,	75
IV. Family Baptisms, - - - -	75
V. Early History of the Church, - -	76
SEC. 7. CONCLUSION. - - - - -	82

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE DUTY OF BAPTISM.

Whatever God thinks it important to command, it is our duty to do. The spirit that trifles with the commands of God, is rebellious. Zeal, fervor, and delight in some Christian exercises, often exist in connection with actual rebellion against the authority of God. King Saul abounded in devotion, but was rebellious, and God told him, “Behold to *obey* is better than sacrifice, and to *hearken* than the fat of rams.”

Now Christ ordains that all believers shall be baptized. Matt. 28 : 19, “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Mark 16 : 16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

John 3 : 5, "Except a man be born of the water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The Holy Spirit by Peter says, Acts 2 : 38, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost," and the record is, verse 41, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Acts 8 : 12, "But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

36 : 37, "And the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest."

Acts 9 : 18, "And immediately there fell from his (Saul's) eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized."

22 : 16, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

10 : 47, 48, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

Thus, wherever the gospel was preached, all who believed were baptized. The act of baptism was enjoined by the Holy Spirit, as uniformly, positively, and emphatically, as faith and repentance; and the command to be baptized, is just as positive as the command to repent, and we have no more right to neglect baptism than repentance.

Some excuse themselves from this duty, because they say, "It is a mere form," "Is not a saving ordinance." But this excuse charges Christ with folly, imputes a trifling, vain, and arrogant spirit to him, in issuing commands with no good or wise object, for no useful purpose. If the act of baptism does no good, if it is a *mere form*, a *non-essential*, then Christ is not a wise, beneficent, and just Ruler, as the gospel represents him to be. It is really chilling to the soul, to hear the excuses, and observe the disrespect which many exhibit towards Christ and his laws, and especially the law of baptism. But baptism is not a *mere form*, any more than prayer is. "Baptism is the answer or response of a good conscience toward God," and consists in the act, and the meaning of the act, or the going forth of the intention, or sentiment of the heart, in the act, as well as the form. Prayer is a form (though not a mere form), but it is useful. Who will assert that *prayer* is non-essential? and yet it is a form as much as baptism. Baptism is really useful. It is

the act by which we legally put on Christ, and identify ourselves with his cause ; it is the oath of allegiance to his government, by which we openly take sides with him, and pledge loyalty to the end of our days ; and this open confession is a condition upon which rich blessings are conferred, blessings that we cannot safely forego. Can we enjoy the favor of God while we slight and reject his commandments ?

Some have much to say about the baptism of the Holy Ghost, as if that was what Christ enjoined upon us. But the baptism of the Holy Ghost is never a *command*, but a *promise*. Who was ever commanded to be baptized with the Holy Spirit ? When did any one but God have power to baptize with the Holy Spirit ? What apostle or teacher ever had power to baptize with the Spirit ? Those who think that Christ commanded his disciples to baptize all those who believe, with the Holy Spirit, “do err, not knowing the Scriptures.”

Moreover, the command is to baptize the persons, the believers ; and the history of the baptisms which occurred, is that they baptized in water. Those who were baptized in Samaria by Philip did not receive the Holy Spirit for several days after they were converted and baptized. Acts 8 : 12, 15. And water is distinctly mentioned in many cases as the element in which the believers

were baptized, Acts 8 : 38, 10 : 47. The ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit are never called a baptism in the New Testament. The bestowal of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and on the household of Cornelius, is termed a baptism, but in no other instances. With these exceptions, baptism in the New Testament refers to an act which man is capable of doing, or has done, or is in duty bound to do ; and this must mean water baptism, for this is the only baptism which man is capable of performing. Hence the command of Christ stands in all its force and sacredness, imposing upon us baptism in water "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit," and no one who desires the favor of Christ should venture to neglect obedience to this his solemn command, lest they be numbered among those "Pharisees and lawyers who rejected the council of God against themselves, not being baptized." Luke 7 : 30.

But many admit that Christ commands us to be baptized, and yet plead that they "do not *feel* it to be their duty to be baptized." This is a most absurd and wicked position. It is an unjustifiable disrespect of the Word of God. When our Saviour commands the convert to be baptized, is not that enough ? Are we to wait for a new revelation to us in particular before we can obey ? Is

not one revelation of duty enough? Are we to look to our feelings for the law of our Christian life, or to the inspired oracles? "I don't feel it to be my duty!" Then your feelings are wrong, for a Christian feels it to be his duty to obey all of the commands of Christ. Search your heart, then, dear reader; look well to your position, beware lest you deceive yourself; remember that Jesus "is the author of eternal life to all them that obey him," and to none others; and if you have not a heart to obey *Christ* rather than your own *feelings*, you have built your hope on the sand. It is a sad case, for any one to make a god of his feelings, and excuse his disobedience to Christ because he does not *feel* like it. To expect the Spirit to impress this special duty upon the mind, and to wait for it, is delusion, dangerous fanaticism. The Spirit has revealed the duty of baptism once, and written it in the Divine oracles, and that is all that it will do. He that waits for a special impression from the Spirit, sins against the very Spirit that he expects to teach him, by slighting the words which he has already spoken. If a person has consecrated his heart to God, his baptism should immediately follow, without regard to special impressions. And if any are waiting for these, they are in this following a different gospel than the one which Jesus has given; and we

would kindly and earnestly remonstrate against their disobedience. They are without excuse, but are not without guilt. To all believers in Christ the words of the servant of God to Saul are appropriate: "Why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

The strong opposition that many cherish to apostolic baptism, leads them to undervalue the solemn ordinance itself. For if it is made to appear that baptism is a "non-essential," they suppose that it consequently becomes a matter of indifference, whether the *form* of the act agrees with the Divine Scriptures or not. Hence the influence of a large part of the Pedobaptist sects is exerted, really, to bring baptism into disrespect; and the effect of this policy is apparent, in the common sentiment that it is a matter of indifference whether we are baptized or not. That many have fallen into this dangerous error, every one is aware, who is at all familiar with the sentiment of the Christian public. But we beg of the friends of Christianity to remember, that just so far as any one law of Christ is brought into disrespect, the whole Christian system suffers. When people are induced to trifle with one law, they readily become lax and irreverent in regard to all of the Divine institutions. And those who, by precept or example, represent baptism as a

“non-essential,” weaken the cause of Christianity, and afford “aid and comfort” to rationalists, free-thinkers, and latitudinarians.

We plead for the integrity of the Christian system, just as Christ has given it to us; without the least detraction or addition; and therefore we urge that all should believe on Jesus, repent of all their sins, and be baptized, and observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded us.

CHAPTER II.

THE ACT OF BAPTISM.

The gospel imposes the duty of baptism. This is some act to be done. Peter says that baptism is the answer of a good conscience towards God. An answer is a formal response, a reply to one who submits to us a proposition. Baptism is the form of reply to God's demand that we should be loyal to Christ. There are various ways, or forms, by which we might return an "answer" to God: but he has thought proper to fix upon *one particular act*, one special form of "answer;" and that form is *baptism*. This legal "answer" does not supercede the duty of those moral acts which indicate our devotion to Christ; neither do moral acts of loyalty supercede the duty of baptism, which is the *legal* response and pledge of fidelity to Christ.

Since *baptism* is the legal "answer," which is to be returned to God, from a good, i. e., an honest conscience, it is obvious that the law obliges us to do this very act, and that we cannot render the *legal*

“answer” by any other act, than the one which the law specifies. The very object of the law is to fix the *form of the “answer.”* If it was to be optional with us, in what *form* we would render our “answer,” the law would not have decided that we should “answer” by baptism. Those who say that “the form is nothing,” that “the spirit of the law is all that is important,” forget that the very intent of the law is to fix the *form* of the “answer.” Why did not the Lord merely command us to give an honest response to his claims, without reference to the *form* of the act? Why was he so particular to define the very act by which the “answer” should be given? It is not the spirit of loyalty that the law of baptism enjoins, but the *form* of expressing our loyalty. Those, therefore, who reject the *form* of the “answer,” annul the law which fixes the form. Since the object of the law is to fix the *form* of the act, those who reject the *form*, reject the law.

The law of baptism is not expressed by a multitude of words of various meanings. Christ and the apostles invariably confined themselves to *one particular word*. From this fact we should infer that he designed to enjoin some one particular form of “answer.” There are many words in the Greek, which denote various uses of water, but no word is used by the inspired writers to enjoin

baptism, except *baptizo*. *Bapto*, another form of the same word, from the same root as *baptizo*, but more general and indefinite in meaning, is, for some reason, avoided, and *baptizo* invariably used.

Baptizo expresses a formal act. Whatever that act is, whether immersion, sprinkling, or pouring, the performance of that particular act is necessary to obedience. It is absurd to talk of doing one act by another, i. e., eating by hearing, riding by walking, immersing by sprinkling. If *baptizo* has a definite meaning, if it expresses a particular act, that act, and no other, must be done to comply with the law. When we do an act, which is not included within the meaning of *baptizo*, for baptism, we are utterly deceived. No man can be baptized by any other act, any more than he can run sitting still, or sleep by walking.

The form of the act must be learned from the meaning of the word which the Saviour used to express the rite, or the "answer," just as the meaning of the words which the Lord used in the law of the Supper, fixes the *act* to be done. We are to "eat" and "drink." These are formal acts. To "eat" and "drink" is essential to the law. Whatever variety may occur in time, place, or attitude of those who celebrate the Supper, all must "eat" and "drink;" the law is not obeyed without these formal acts. And the form of the act to be

done, must be decided by the meaning of the words which the Saviour used. We know that we are to "eat" and "drink," because the words *Phago* and *Pio*, which the Saviour used, mean to *eat* and *drink*. How absurd to suppose that this law of the Supper can be obeyed without performing the very acts which it enjoins. Only think of eating by hearing! Drinking by seeing! Can we obey the *spirit* of this law, and not do the acts it prescribes? Can we celebrate the Lord's death in this supper, and not "eat" and "drink"?

Now we propose to learn, if we can, what *baptizo* means, that we may know what we are to do when we are baptized. We must learn the form of the act of baptism, or we cannot possibly know what act we are to perform.

But the learned men of the sects are at war about the meaning of this word. The wise and good men on one side assert that *baptizo* means to sprinkle, pour, or immerse, and that one act is just as agreeable to its meaning as another. And those equally learned and good, on the other side, just as positively assert that *baptizo* never means to sprinkle, but exclusively means to immerse. This disagreement proves that education, prejudice, sectarian zeal, association, or some such influence, warps the judgment of good men, and leads them to believe, defend, and practice error. This is no

uncommon thing among men. Both sides cannot be right in this case. One party must be wrong, perhaps both are. We are very liable to be deceived by partisan zeal. In courts of law the most honest of men are not allowed to sit on jury in a case where they are personally interested. It is not safe. No more is it safe to trust to the opinions and reasonings of sectarians, in regard to this question in dispute. Baptists and Pedobaptists are equally liable to be led astray by their zeal for their party. We want to be right. But we despair of finding the truth by listening to the arguings of sectarians. We must exclude them *all* from court, and seek light from other sources.

We desire to know just what act *baptizo* expresses. We will seek for testimony outside of the sects, so as, if possible, to get the opinion of candid and competent men.

SECTION 1.

We appeal to the most distinguished Greek scholars, who have devoted their lives to the study of the meaning of words. Authors of Greek dictionaries, who investigate and write as scholars and not as sectarians, who make it their business to state *what words mean*, and not to support a sectarian dogma, shall be our witnesses. We will look to those who

are received as good authority in the colleges and universities of all the sects. These are the most competent and impartial witnesses within our knowledge. We would rather trust them than the most learned and pious men in any or all the sects, who have a party to defend. We will give the names of fifteen of these distinguished authors, with whom all others agree. Scapula, Henricus, Stephanus, Bass, Robertson, Donnegan, Pickering, Schlensner, Pasor, Parkhurst, Greenfield, Bretschneider, Stokins, Liddell & Scott, and Robinson.

These men agree in stating that *baptizo* means *to immerse, plunge, dip, wash by immersing, sink, submerge, overwhelm*. And none of them define it to mean *to sprinkle*, under any circumstances. And there is not a Greek dictionary to be found, that is received as authority, in Pedobaptist colleges and universities, that defines *baptizo*, *to sprinkle*. According to these witnesses, it always means *to immerse*, and never *to sprinkle*. If it does ever mean to sprinkle, why have not some of these learned men discovered it? Why is it that excited partisans are the only persons that discover this meaning? Who are most likely to be right in this matter, those who are the acknowledged masters of Greek definitions, and who write as scholars, or those who look through sectarian spectacles, and write to defend a sectarian hobby? If the word

does mean to *sprinkle*, it is unaccountable that among the score or two of authors of standard Greek dictionaries, not a single one of them has ever discovered it.

We beg leave to add the testimony of a very distinguished classical author, who is not a Baptist, to the above. As a scholar and author he is not excelled in America.

“COLUMBIA COLLEGE, March 27, 1843.

“*My Dear Sir:*—There is no authority whatever for the singular remark made by the Rev. Dr. Spring, relative to the force of *baptizo*. The primary meaning of the word is to dip, or immerse, and its secondary meanings, *if it have any*, all refer, in some way or other, to the same leading idea. Sprinkling, &c., are entirely out of the question. I have delayed answering your letter, in hope that you would call and favor me with a visit, when we might talk the matter over at our leisure. I presume, however, that what I have here written will answer your purpose.

Yours truly,

CHARLES ANTHON.”

But the advocates of sprinkling assure us that the “Dictionaries have nothing to do with the question.” But who does know what *baptizo* means if these learned authors do not? Who are capable of

giving a wise, reliable, and important testimony, if they are not? Shall we resort to the defenders of *sprinkling* for a definition, and rely upon them? Are they likely to be more learned, and freer from bias and prejudice than others? We know how easily poor human nature is warped and blinded by partisan zeal. We cannot trust sectarians in this case.

But why do they rule the dictionaries out of court? If they supported sprinkling by their testimony, would they be thus summarily ejected? Is not prejudice at the bottom of all this uneasiness?

We are told that *baptizo* does not mean the same in the New Testament that it does in the classics; that it is used in a *religious* sense here, and hence its classic use is no guide in deciding the case of baptism. But this is absurd. Why should a certain act be changed to another act, because it is to be performed for a religious purpose? Is the classical definition of "eat" no guide to the act of eating the Lord's Supper? Does the act, "to drink," become some other act, when performed for religious purposes?

Moreover, when Christ and the apostles commanded penitents to be baptized, they would certainly be understood to command an act agreeing with the common use of the word *baptizo*, to immerse. They would conclude that a certain spe-

cific act was to be done for a specific religious purpose. It is the weakest of fallacies to argue that when the object of an act is changed, the form of the act is also changed, i. e., the certain act becomes another act, *baptizo* becomes *rantizo*, *immersion* becomes *sprinkling*, that *eating* may become *touching* the bread, and *drinking* may become *looking* upon the cup.

We are admonished, by this quibbling, of the importance of avoiding and distrusting the testimony and reasonings of sectarians, and listening alone to the testimony of the learned men who write as scholars, and not as partisans. We must learn from them what we are to do when we would obey the commands of Christ, "be baptized," "eat of this bread," "drink of this cup." And as they all agree in stating that the current meaning of *baptizo* is *to immerse*, and never to sprinkle, we will do the act commanded. We cannot trust to speculations, refinements, quibblings, guesses, possibilities. We wish to travel in a well defined, straightforward, common sense track, do right, obey implicitly, run no risks, and therefore we will practice *immersion* and reject *sprinkling*.

SECTION 2.

We have still other unsectarian witnesses, the Cyclopædists. Religious Cyclopædists we will re-

ject, for they are sectarian, and therefore liable to be prejudiced. Literary and scientific Cyclopædists are more likely to be unbiased by partisan zeal. What do they say of the act of baptism?

The *Edinburgh Encyclopædia* says: "In the time of the Apostles the form of baptism was very simple. The person to be baptized was dipped in a river or vessel, with the words which Christ had ordained, and to express more fully his change of character, generally assumed a new name."

Brand's Cyclopædia says: "Baptism (Greek, *bapto*, I dip) was originally administered by immersion, which act is thought by some to be necessary to the sacrament."

Chambers' Cyclopædia says: "Baptism, in theology, formed from the Greek *baptizo*, of *bapto*, I dip, or *plunge*." "Some are of opinion that sprinkling, in *baptism*, was begun in cold countries. It was introduced into England about the beginning of the ninth century."

The *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *London Encyclopædia*, *Rees Cyclopædia*, and *Encyclopædia Americana*, perfectly agree with the above testimony, that the primitive practice was to *immerse*, and that this is what *baptizo* signifies. Now these works were not written to defend sectarian dogmas, but for historic and scientific purposes; and they are the production, generally, of ripe and independent

scholars. They agree with the Greek dictionaries as to the meaning of *baptizo*, and with one voice reject the assumption that *rantizo* and *baptizo* agree in meaning. *Rantizo* is the word which signifies to *sprinkle*, and is never confounded by the sacred writers with *baptizo*, to *immerse*.

SECTION 3.

Our next appeal is to church historians. Since all of the Greek dictionaries, and all of the standard literary Cyclopædists, are so positive in their testimony that immersion is the only proper act of baptism, according to the sense of the word *baptizo*, it is well to ask of the standard church historians, whether the primitive Christians practiced according to this meaning of the word. But we will not appeal to any Baptist historians, for they may be biased in favor of immersion, and our desire is to reject all prejudiced testimony. If we could find any historians who are Baptists, testifying in favor of sprinkling in the primitive church, we would surely produce them, for men do not testify against themselves, except where the facts are so plain and positive that they cannot escape it. It is in just such a case of positive fact as this that Pedobaptist historians agree in asserting positively that the early Christians did uniformly *immerse* for *baptism*. The facts oblige them to give this testimony,

or they would not thus convict themselves. We will quote from two of the most distinguished Pe-dobaptist historians, with whom every other standard historian agrees.

Mosheim ; Church History, page 87, Vol. 1, says, "In this (1st) century *baptism* was administered in convenient places without the public assemblies, and by immersing the candidate wholly in water." But he does not give the least hint, or intimation that sprinkling was ever practiced either in the first or second century. Is it supposable that so learned a man as Mosheim, in the history of the Christian church, could have been ignorant of the fact of sprinkling for baptism, had it really been practiced? Would he have failed to justify the practice of his own church, by the example of the primitive church, if it had been possible to find an example of *sprinkling* during the first two hundred years of the Christian history?

Let us hear *Neander*, the chief of church historians. Vol. 1, page 310, "In respect to the form of *baptism*, it was in conformity with the original import of the symbol, performed by immersion, a sign of entire baptism into the Holy Spirit, of being entirely penetrated by the same."

Neander gives us no intimation that sprinkling was ever, in any case, under any circumstances, practiced during this century, except in case of sick

persons. Then they approached immersion as nearly as possible by wetting the body thoroughly. And even this was not considered valid, if the party recovered. All standard historians, such as Geisler, Waddington, Schaff, Eusebius, agree in stating that the primitive church uniformly practiced immersion, and that sprinkling was gradually introduced in cases of sickness, after baptism came to be regarded as a means of exorcising the devil, and purging out sin. But for nearly a thousand years nothing but immersion was tolerated where the party was not sick. Is it not singular that all of these distinguished Pedobaptist historians agree in declaring *immersion* to have been the practice of the primitive church? Is it likely that they give a false testimony in the case? Are they to be set aside for the partial testimony of men who read, translate, argue, think, under the bias of sectarian zeal? They are agreed with all the learned scholars who are received as authorized definers of the Greek language, and with the learned Encyclopædists, and the three make as strong, competent, and impartial a company of witnesses as can be brought forward in any case whatever. To the unprejudiced, their testimony must be final.

SECTION 4.

The practice of the Greek church corroborates the above. About the eighth century the Greek and

Latin sections of the church divided, making the Greek and the Papal churches, which still exist. Now the Greek church invariably baptize by immersion. But the Papal or Latin church practice sprinkling for baptism. Therefore the Greek or the Latin church must have changed the form of this rite since the separation, for we have not the least intimation of a difference upon this point before the division. Which party has changed? It is a notorious fact that the Greeks claim to have continued to practice according to the sense of the word *baptizo*, and the example of the primitive church, and protest that they have not changed the rite. And the Papal church confess that they have changed the *form* of the act, and claim that they have a right to do so. We are not ignorant of the assumptions of the Papal church—how she exalts herself above God, and supplants the gospel by her traditions. This spirit of usurpation is exercised in changing *baptism* to *sprinkling*, or *baptizo* to *ran-tizo*; and the Protestant sects that have come out from Rome have copied this tradition, practice and defend this Papal usurpation, and *sprinkle* their candidates rather than *baptize* them. In case of sick persons, at an early day, the Papists were accustomed to wet the party thoroughly upon his bed, though this was not formally authorized, and indeed was generally discouraged until the eighth century. Here is the history of the first law that the Papal

church ever enacted, authorizing *sprinkling* for baptism. *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, Art. Baptism. "The first law for sprinkling was obtained in the following manner: Pope Stephen second, being driven from Rome by Adolphus, king of the Lombards, in 753, fled to Pepin, who, a short time before, had usurped the crown of France. Whilst he remained there the Monks of Cressy, in Brittany, consulted him, whether in case of *necessity* baptism procured on the head of the infant would be lawful. Stephen replied that it would. It was not till the year 1311 that the Legislature, in a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent. In Scotland, however, sprinkling was never practiced in ordinary cases, till after the Reformation (about the middle of the sixteenth century). From Scotland it made its way into England, in the reign of Elizabeth, but was not authorized in the established church." Every scholar knows, or ought to know, that this history of the case is correct. The rite of sprinkling came in by degrees, was practiced without authority, was winked at, just as the other corruptions of Papacy were, and in the eighth century secured a formal recognition. This the Papists confess and justify. Protestants who have copied this tradition, but do not like its parentage, tax their utmost ingenuity to prove that sprinkling was practiced by the primitive church,

and that it is not inconsistent with the word which Jesus employed to describe the act of baptism. Which party is most consistent, the reader must judge. The fact is, that sprinkling is purely a Papal tradition, and there is no more authority for it in the gospel, or in the practice of the primitive church, than there is for any of the other corruptions of that mother of heresy. Take, then, the claim of the Greek church that they have not changed the rite, and the confession of the Papal church, that they have changed it; and the history of the case, setting forth when, how, and for what reason, they adopted sprinkling for baptism, how can we escape the conclusion that all who sprinkle, and call it baptism are, in thus doing, following Rome, and not Christ.

SECTION 5.

Scriptural references to baptism corroborate the above testimony. Not a case of baptism is recorded or referred to in the New Testament which favors anything else than immersion. Mark 1: 5, those who came to John "Were baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Mark 1: 9, Matt. 3: 13, Luke 3: 21. "Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan." "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."

Acts 8 : 38, "And they went down both into the water ; both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."

Consider that *baptizo* always means to *immerse*, and these incidental circumstances will be seen to harmonize with the meaning of the word. But if we should read of baptizing upon the "house top," "out of a bowl," with a spoonful of water, this would be inconsistent with the meaning of the word, and would cause doubt and perplexity. But we have no such case. There is not an allusion to a case of baptism in the whole New Testament inconsistent with immersion. The baptism of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost is sometimes urged as inconsistent with immersion. It is asked, How could so many be baptized in one day? The difficulty here is a mere shadow. There were seventy disciples, and twelve apostles present, to do the duties of the day. Now divide 3000 by 82, and you will find that each one would have only a fraction more than 36 to baptize. This would be the work of not more than twenty minutes.

Moreover Paul, in Rom. 6 : 3, 4, 5, and Col. 2 : 12, refers to baptism as a *burial*. Now, whether this language is figurative or literal, it matters not. In either case it equally refers to baptism, and proves that the Romans and Colossians were *buried* when they were baptized. But where do we read

of being *sprinkled* with Christ ; where is there any allusion to baptism as sprinkling ? Not an instance can be found.

Some will cite us to Ezekiel 36 : 25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you," &c. But this has no reference at all to the New Covenant. Under the Mosaic covenant, the people were sprinkled, never, however, with mere water, but with water and ashes intermingled. And Ezekiel is prophesying of the return of Israel from captivity, and the ceremonies of purification which would then be observed. He has not the remotest allusion to the Christian institutions. But in every allusion to baptism in the sacred oracles, when the least reference is had to the form of the act, immersion is indicated. "Went down into the water," "baptized in the river of Jordan," "buried with Christ by baptism," are the common forms of allusion. Where there is no allusion to the *form* of the act at all, the advocates of sprinkling imagine that sprinkling is certain !

SECTION 6.

Every figurative use of the word baptizo, in the New Testament, involve immersion.

The beauty of a figure consists in giving the literal sense of a word a metaphorical application.

Hence, in all proper metaphors, we can trace the sense of the literal. So in the use of *baptizo*, as a metaphor, we can invariably trace its literal meaning, either as to the form of the act, or the result of the act set forth by the word.

1. *The baptism of the Holy Spirit.* Matt. 3 : 11. Acts 1 : 5. Christ was to baptize with the Holy Ghost. This metaphor refers to the effect of the baptism, or the bestowal of the Spirit. The Spirit was not to be *baptized out* upon the people ; the Spirit was not to be baptized, but the people ; hence it is the *effect* that is contemplated. And what was the effect ? Were their minds just touched a little by the Spirit, slightly influenced, barely sprinkled by the Comforter ? Their whole souls were imbued with, brought under the control of, overwhelmed by, the Spirit. Sprinkling is a most insignificant and false representation of the wonderful effect of the gift of the Spirit which was shed upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. It filled their souls, and controlled their speech, it overwhelmed—immersed them. Nothing short of this expresses the abundant gift of God.

2. *Baptism of fire.* Matt. 3 : 11, Luke 3 : 16, 17, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:" "whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the

wheat into his garner ; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." The baptism of fire is the punishment of the wicked. Fire, in the sacred oracles, uniformly denotes punishment, or trials, afflictions, or persecutions. Now, is the punishment of the enemies of Christ properly represented by sprinkling? Can the word mean, "And the chaff shall be sprinkled with a few drops of punishment?" Nothing short of immersion can represent this destruction of the chaff, this baptism of fire.

3. *The birth of water.* John 3 : 5, "Born of water and the Spirit." This birth of water is the outward expression of the birth of the soul to a spiritual life. Can this be represented by sprinkling? Is a drop of water upon a person's brow or face a true figure of a birth? It is impossible to invent an act more unlike a birth, than the rite of sprinkling. And yet baptism is spoken of as a birth of water. But immersion is the only act that represents a birth ; or that represents the spiritual change, of which baptism is the outward figure. Is the "new birth" of the soul such a partial, limited, insignificant event, that the moistened end of a man's fingers, laid upon the forehead, properly represents it? This sprinkling *rite* has robbed these words of Jesus of all their beauty and force—it has practically *excluded* from *baptism* the idea of a birth,

and given nothing in exchange. We would to God that those brethren who practice sprinkling would cease thus to pervert the right ways of the Lord.

4. *Baptism of suffering.* Mark 10 : 38, 39, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" "With the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized." All Christian scholars agree that Christ here refers to the terrible sufferings which were to overwhelm him, and also be the portion of his disciples. Now, are these sufferings truthfully represented under the metaphor of *sprinkling*? Was Christ merely sprinkled with sorrows when he bore the sins of the world? Did the early Christians suffer a mere sprinkling of persecution while preaching Jesus to a guilty world? How insipid, untruthful, meaningless, this practice of sprinkling makes the words of our Saviour! "Can ye be sprinkled with the sprinkling of suffering that I am sprinkled with"! Shocking! And yet, if sprinkling is baptism, the Saviour said no more than this. His sufferings are but a sprinkling. (Metaphors are never weaker than the facts, but rather stronger; so that the sufferings of Christ, according to this notion, must have been as limited upon his soul, as sprinkling is a limited application of water to the body. But such an insipid metaphor with reference to Christ's sufferings,

is false, wholly false.) Nothing short of *immersion* can truthfully represent the sorrows which overwhelmed his holy soul. Sectarian zeal has no right to rob our Saviour's words of all meaning, and represent his sufferings as a trifle. We protest against this making void the words of Christ by human tradition. We plead for immersion because the idea of sprinkling for baptism destroys, utterly ruins, some of the most significant and touching words of inspiration. To change the meaning of any other word in the Christian Scriptures, would not cause an equally painful mutilation of the word of God as this perversion of the meaning of baptizo.

5. *Baptism the figure of the resurrection.* Rom. 6 : 4, 5, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death ; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." 1 Cor. 15 : 29, "Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all ? Why are they then baptized for the dead ?" i. e., what is the meaning of your baptism ; why are you baptized to represent the resurrection, if there is no resurrection ? Col. 2 : 12, 1 Pet. 3 : 21.

By baptism the disciple declared his faith in the

resurrection of Christ, and his hope of the resurrection of all men ; and illustrated this truth by this very act. Thus baptism is a perpetual memorial of the resurrection of Christ, as the supper is a memorial of his death. If Christ was not raised, faith, preaching and hope are all in vain ; he is not the true Messiah. And hence the importance of giving prominence to this event by the rite of baptism. The resurrection of Christ proves his divinity, proves that the gospel scheme is of God, and that our hope in Christ is well grounded. We embody this fact and our faith in it in baptism. This rite never refers in symbol to the crucifixion, to the shedding of Christ's blood, to the " blood of sprinkling." That event is symbolized by the supper. But baptism is intimately connected with the resurrection, is set forth as the memorial of the resurrection, is the proper symbol, and the embodiment of faith, in the resurrection, so much so that it was absurd, inconsistent for those who had been baptized to deny the resurrection ; for having declared faith in it by this act, having illustrated it by the act, they stultified themselves when they denied the doctrine. Now, is the resurrection properly symbolized by sprinkling ? Those who sprinkle, and call it baptism, utterly destroy the symbol of the resurrection, they subvert the design of Christ in establishing this memorial, they pre-

vent the formal embodiment of this glorious truth, and reverse the law of Christ in respect to it. No act can be farther removed from a fit symbol of the resurrection than sprinkling. It is just as unlike this event as it can possibly be. It does not bear the remotest resemblance to it. Now we plead for the perpetuity of this memorial of our Lord's resurrection, and pledge of our resurrection, at the last day. We protest against this destruction of one of the most beautiful and important features of the Christian system. Immersion is the only act by which this great truth of Christianity can be properly commemorated, and when we give up immersion, we give up baptism, we sacrifice all the beauty, meaning and profit of baptism; nothing is left us worth preserving.

6. *Baptism unto Moses.* 1 Cor. 10: 1, 2, "I would not that you should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The history of this event is found in Ex. 14. The Israelites had the pillar of fire before them, and when the hosts of Egypt came upon them, it arose and spread over, and behind them, leaving a dark cloud in the rear. When thus concealed, they marched into the tomb prepared in the sea. Paul says, they were *under* the cloud, and passed through the sea; and they

were therefore in the tomb; they were buried, immersed, if any one was ever immersed. But by passing through the sea in this entombed condition, surrounded, completely shut in, by the cloud and the sea, they were baptized. What, then, can baptism mean here? Were they sprinkled? Not a drop of water touched them. Were they poured? We have not a particle of evidence of it. Were they immersed? We know that the cloud and the sea completely surrounded and covered, and entombed them. This was certainly an immersion; not in water alone, not by being wet, but by being entombed in cloud and sea. So, then, this figurative use of baptism involves immersion, and nothing short of immersion.

We know of no other figurative uses of baptism in the New Testament. We have seen that in every instance where baptism is used as a metaphor, the nature of the case cannot be met by sprinkling. The true sense, the beauty, force, and truthfulness of the symbols are wholly destroyed by substituting sprinkling for immersion. And there is not a single case where the symbolic use of baptism by Christ or the apostles can, by any means, be made to refer to sprinkling, even by remote implication; and the substitution of sprinkling for immersion, practically "takes away" a goodly portion of the Divine oracles, crushes out the sense

from many passages, and adopts human tradition in their place. Let the reader review the cases where baptism is used figuratively; the baptism of the Holy Spirit; the baptism of fire; the birth of water, by which the birth of the soul is bodied forth; the baptism of sufferings; baptism to represent the resurrection; and baptism unto Moses, under the cloud and in the sea, and he must be satisfied that to sprinkle for baptism is a sad perversion of the right ways of the Lord.

SECTION 7.

Conclusion.

We will not proceed farther in the argument. If what we have adduced as proof does not convince, it will be of little avail to multiply argument. There is a prevalent obstacle to conviction, which argument cannot overcome. Sectarian prejudice is not affected by reason, and we do not expect to open its blind eyes. But to the candid we confidently submit our argument as conclusive. If it is not so, why does not *one*, even *one*, standard Greek Dictionary define *baptizo* to mean to *sprinkle*? Why is it left for sectarians alone to discover this meaning? Why do all the literary Cyclopædists agree with the Dictionaries, that the literal act

denoted by *baptizo* is to immerse? Why do all the standard Pedobaptist church historians testify that the primitive church practiced immersion, and not sprinkling; and that sprinkling was introduced several hundred years after Christ? Why do the Greek church claim, and the Papal church admit, that the Papal church did change the form of the rite of baptism, from immersion to sprinkling? Why do Greek, and Papal, and many Protestant historians, agree in stating that sprinkling was introduced by the Papal church, and was not the practice of the primitive church, if these statements are not true? Why is there no allusion in the New Testament, in any form or manner, to sprinkling, if that is lawful baptism? Why does every symbolic use of *baptizo* absolutely necessitate the idea of immersion, if immersion is not the only act of baptism? Why are advocates of sprinkling driven to adopt the most strange and dangerous principles of reasoning, in order to make out their case, if they are right? Does truth demand such absurd speculations, quibblings, guesses? Why do they insist and assert that the testimony of the Dictionaries is of no force? that the word *baptizo* has no definite meaning, when all the dictionaries say that it has? Why try to make out, that "in the river Jordan," only means "near by," "round about!" Why do they call the rite

“indecent,” and thus censure our Saviour, and cast odium upon his ordinance? Why do they exert all their skill to make the Lord’s commands appear ridiculous? Why call this rite “non-essential?” weaken confidence in it, or destroy all sense of obligation to obey? If they had a good cause, if they were right, these desperate and dangerous expedients would not be necessary. The road to truth is straight, direct, plain.

We are not pleading for “much water,” nor “little water.” We are not arguing whether little or much water will do the most good. We plead for the law of Christ; we argue for obedience to his commands. We protest against perverting, changing those laws to suit the tastes or prejudices of men. We plead for a return to the “old paths,” and the rejection of *all* the Papal rites and traditions which that “Old Harlot” has brought forth. Sprinkling for baptism was born of her, and we protest against its continuance. The different Protestant sects, as they came out of Rome, brought this rite with them. Papists and Protestants are agreed in the practice of sprinkling for baptism. (Baptists are not Protestants, in the sense of coming off from Rome.) Sprinkling is a relic of Papacy. This fact is supported by all history.

The rules of interpretation which are adopted to

justify sprinkling, are destructive to the whole Christian system; they make the gospel a loose, uncertain, contradictory affair. By the very process of reasoning which the advocates of sprinkling adopt, we can prove by the Bible any and every crude and crazy system that was ever conceived. And every person who fights against the natural, literal, legitimate meaning of *baptizo*, is dealing heavy blows against every just rule of interpretation, and hence against every doctrine of Christ. Therefore our zeal is not merely for this rite, but for the entire Christian system. We see danger in this war against Christian baptism. We see the beginning of general skepticism; the birth of a loose and fatal system of trifling with the words of Christ. The ceaseless changes that are rung upon the phrases, "it is a nonessential," "it is not a saving ordinance," "the form is nothing, so long as we preserve the spirit," "the laws of Christ are not arbitrary," are just so many assaults upon the authority of Christ. He has imposed this rite, as a test of fidelity, a form by which we may embody our loyalty, and openly identify ourselves with him and his cause; but these cavillers dissuade from careful obedience, make light of particular conformity to the Lord's will, encourage men to follow their own fancy rather than the law of Christ, and thus undermine the whole authority of Christ.

For this cause we plead for a rigid adherence to the exact form of the law.

There is a constant tendency to swing off to a rationalistic, traditional, fashionable religion, and "make void the law of God," and this rite of baptism involves the whole question. Shall we strictly obey Christ? Shall we practice exactly the religion which he has instituted? Shall we hold fast to the form of doctrine which he has given us? or shall we have other gods and other laws? This is what is involved in this question of baptism. We contend for a certain *act*, because that is the very act which Christ commands us to perform; because that in that act is involved the principle of fidelity to the supreme authority of Christ; because the substitution of another act for the one definitely enjoined by the word *baptizo*, is a dangerous trifling with the Lord's authority, and opens the door to general rationalism and looseness in religion; because *immersion* is the only act which is consistent with the symbolic use of *baptizo*, and to substitute sprinkling is to strike out some of the richest and most beautiful lessons of the gospel, and make the words of inspiration insipid and meaningless; because sprinkling is a Papal, and not a Christian, rite; because it is a privilege which every believer has a right to enjoy, of embodying his faith and loyalty in just that act

which Jesus has instituted ; and because there is danger that Christ will say of those who reject this rite, and prefer the Papal one, as was said of certain ones of old, Luke 7 : 30, “ *They rejected the council of God against themselves, not being baptized.*”

CHAPTER III.

SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

All agree that penitent believers are proper subjects of Christian baptism. But some deny, while others affirm, that unconscious babes are entitled to this rite. This point has long been sharply controverted. One party is certainly in error. Both cannot be right.

If God commands or authorizes infant baptism, it is a fearful thing to oppose it. But if he does not, then those who advocate and practice it, "add to the words of the book of this prophecy," usurp the prerogatives of God, and distract the family of believers. Moreover, if the baptism of believers alone is authorized in the gospel, the introduction of infant baptism destroys, annihilates God's ordinance by human usurpation. As baptism is to be administered but once, so far as it is given to babes, it is forbidden to adults. The baptism of babes, and that of believers, are materially different.

Whichever becomes prevalent, destroys the other. Both cannot exist together; one necessarily supplants the other. So far as infant baptism prevails, believers' baptism falls into disuse. It is important, then, that we should learn the truth on this question. To teach and practice error, when so much is at stake, is most unfortunate.

The "aid and comfort" which infidelity derives from the divisions of Christians, should stimulate us to strive for the truth, for in truth there is union.

Our disagreement upon the positive institutions of Christ, is even a greater reproach than that upon moral questions. The skeptic says, "You cannot understand your own gospel; you disagree upon the most simple and tangible features of your book; even your law upon the positive rites, where above all, there should be plainness, simplicity and definiteness, is so uncertain, that you are befogged and in confusion. Such a book is no fit guide to mortals. It could not have come from God."

For the truth's sake, for the honor of our holy religion, for the union and comfort of believers, for the good of an unbelieving world, we ought to lay aside all prejudice, and strive earnestly to know just what the mind of the Lord is upon this subject. This very thing the writer has endeavored to do. And after protracted and patient investiga-

tion of the whole question, in all of its phases, with the discussions of learned men upon it, we have become fully settled in the conclusion that,—

Penitent believers only are scriptural subjects of Christian baptism.

We propose a brief statement of the reasons which have brought us to this conclusion.

SECTION 1.

None but believers are commanded to be baptized.

The commission, Matt. 28 : 19, commands the minister first to “teach all nations.” Now this word teach is not the same as is found in the next verse. *Mathateusate*, the first word, properly means to *convert*, or *make disciples of*. The second word is *didasco*, and means simply to *instruct*.

So in Mark 16 : 16, faith is placed before baptism. In every case of baptism recorded in the New Testament, faith is either the expressed or implied antecedent and condition. John’s baptism was the “baptism of repentance,” which, of course, excluded babes. And Christ’s command was, to *teach, convert*, lead to faith, and then baptize.

Now, the law of baptism cannot command the baptism of any parties that are not mentioned in the law. Those who have faith, are taught,

converted, are the only ones mentioned. Therefore they alone are commanded to be baptized. And there is no supplemental law to this. In no instance are any commanded to be baptized who are destitute of faith. Nor is there a hint, or allusion, or statement that indicates that any others were ever baptized by the apostles, or their contemporaries.

The baptism of a babe is so radically different from that of a believer, that its baptism cannot be inferred from the latter. The act is peculiar, unlike the other, specific and distinct, and must therefore have a distinct law to authorize or enjoin it. The babe is passive in baptism, the adult is active; the babe is unconscious, the adult exercises reason and judgment in the act; the babe is involuntary, the adult is voluntary; baptism of the babe is the act of another; to the adult it is his own act; the babe expresses nothing by the act, for he knows nothing; in this act the believer responds to God's claims, returns "an answer of a good conscience to God," the babe enters into no covenant, makes no vows, assumes no obligation, but the believer vows loyalty to Christ. Hence, infant baptism is not the *same rite* or *ordinance* that believer's baptism is. The command to baptize believers cannot be construed to enjoin another and very different rite, the baptism of unconscious babes. This rite needs

a specific law to authorize it, just as much as believer's baptism does.

When God instituted circumcision, he deemed it necessary to introduce a definite clause commanding the circumcision of babes. This shows that, in his judgment, a law imposing a rite upon adults, did not impose it upon infants, unless they are definitely mentioned in it. There was the same necessity for their being named in the law of baptism, to make it lawful to baptize them. And the fact that they are not mentioned in the law, proves that they are not to be baptized. It is a strange logic, that can infer a rite like that of infant baptism, so peculiar, distinct, and unlike any other, from a law that institutes another and entirely different rite. It is evident that the law of Christ does not directly, nor by implication, or inference, or in any other way, enjoin the rite of infant baptism. And whoever assumes to practice it, therefore, usurps the prerogatives of God; for it is his prerogative alone to institute Christian rites. Now, to create and practice a rite as Divine, which God has not appointed, to use the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, when God has not given authority, to pretend Divine authority when there is none, is a most solemn and fearful usurpation. Is not this done in the practice of infant baptism?

SECTION 2.

The baptism of all who have not faith, is prohibited by the law of Christ.

Pedobaptists place great reliance upon the assumption that infant baptism is not *prohibited* by the word of God. Their argument is, "The gospel does not forbid the baptism of unconscious babes, therefore it is our duty to baptize them. So the Papists reason, "The gospel does not forbid the baptism of bells, coffins, altars, robes, &c., therefore it is right to baptize them." Then, because God has not forbidden a rite or ceremony, we may assume to practice it as a Divinely authorized act, and use the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to sanction it! Have we a right thus to make ordinances for God? Even if it were true that the gospel does not forbid this rite, it becomes usurpation to practice it without a "thus saith the Lord," authorizing and commanding it.

But the law does prohibit it. It is an approved rule of legal interpretation, that when a law describes the character of the parties who are to act, enjoy, or suffer under its provisions, it excludes all others. A summons that calls "freeholders" to sit on a jury, excludes all others. An enlistment law that calls for men of a certain age and stature, excludes all others from enlistment. An

election law that provides that all white males over twenty-one years of age may vote, excludes all minors, females and blacks, from voting. It is wholly unnecessary to state in words, "minors, females and blacks shall not vote." The simple fact that certain characters are described as entitled to vote, excludes all persons who do not possess that specified character.

The law of circumcision did not, in *words*, prohibit the circumcision of females, but it did, in *fact*, prohibit it, by describing the character of those who were to be circumcised.

The law of baptism specifies what characters shall be baptized. It does not ordain the baptism of males nor females, Jews nor Gentiles, those born of Christian parents, nor those born of infidel parents, as such. No element of birth, age, sex, or physical relation enters into the required character at all. But the elements which the law, and the practice of the apostles do fix upon, are expressed in the words, "teach," "convert," "believeth," "repent," "response of a good conscience toward God." These words involve and express intelligence, knowledge of God, faith in Christ, consecration to his authority, choice of his service. All persons who possess a character containing these elements, are commanded to be baptized. Those possessed of such a character are the only ones

who are described in the law, the only ones that are commanded to be baptized. Now, then, by commanding those of a certain character to be baptized, all who do not possess this character are excluded. And since babes cannot possess the prescribed character, they are no more entitled to baptism than minors are to vote, under the law above referred to ; they are *excluded* from baptism, just as positively as believers are *included*. There is no logical escape from this conclusion. The law does describe who shall be baptized. Babes cannot come within that description. But all who do not answer to the description of the law, are excluded. By this law, then, the baptism of infants is prohibited.

Pedobaptists attempt to turn the point of this argument by asserting that we have no specific law for admitting females to the Lord's supper, and yet they are not excluded.

We reply, that while there is no authority for *males* nor *females*, as such, to come to the Lord's table, since *sex* is not an element in the character presented as qualifying for the Lord's supper, *all disciples* are commanded to eat ; and as females, as well as males, are disciples, they are, *as disciples*, commanded to partake. But since the law does specify that *disciples* shall partake of the supper, does it not exclude all who are not disciples ?

Have babes and sinners a right to the supper? Are the Papists right in giving the supper to babes? Are not children and sinners excluded from baptism on the same principle that they are excluded from the supper? The words of the law do not exclude them in either case, by specifically mentioning them, but the provision of the law, that certain characters are entitled to these rights, positively excludes all who do not possess these qualifications. But at an early day, as early as the last of the second century, it was claimed that babes had a right to the Lord's supper. We have historic evidence that infant communion was practiced even before infant baptism. And the Papists claim that this early practice, is proof that it is an apostolic tradition, and obligatory upon the church now. They justify it on the same basis, by the same reasons, that they justify infant baptism. But Protestants reject one of these rites and practice the other. Why not practice both? Our Pedobaptist brethren agree to reject babes from the supper, because they are not qualified to discern the meaning of the rite, because they are not disciples. For the same reasons babes should be excluded from baptism. The law of baptism *excludes* them, by describing those who are entitled to baptism, as possessed of qualities which are *impossible* to babes.

Our opponents object again ; that if the law of baptism excludes babes from baptism, it must also exclude them from salvation, as they are as incapable of the character upon which salvation is promised, as of the prescribed qualifications for baptism.

We confess that babes are excluded from salvation, if God has no arrangement to save them on terms differing from those upon which sinners are saved. But we have reliable testimony from God that babes are eligible to salvation without any of the conditions to which sinners are subject. They are saved without faith, repentance or baptism, and God has given his word to this effect. But he has not intimated in his word that babes are to be baptized. If God has made a special provision for their baptism, as he has for their salvation, then let that provision be presented. It is not in the commission. No one has ever yet found it in God's Word.

But the doctrine of infant baptism assumes that infants are *not saved*, without complying with conditions which are adapted alone to sinners. Its advocates, from the first, have taught that baptism was a means by which the babe was delivered from the wrath of God ; that all who were not baptized were still the victims of that wrath. Nine-tenths

of those who practice infant baptism believe this now. Indeed, this doctrine is the only reasonable justification of the rite. If it does not save the "little ones," what good does it do? What is the use of it? We are told that it "introduces them into the covenant of grace." Then, are all others *out of the covenant of grace*? Is there no mercy for them? In England and America many Pedobaptists have abandoned this doctrine, that baptism is necessary to save the babe. But in doing so, they reject the uniform doctrine of the rite, since its first introduction. Even now, when a babe is baptized (sprinkled) by a Methodist minister, he prays, "We beseech thee for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt look upon this child, wash him, and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost, that he, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's church." This implies, 1. That the child is exposed to the wrath of God. 2. That his baptism is a means of his deliverance.

So far as infant baptism has any force or meaning, according to the theory of its advocates, it implies that babes, without baptism, are exposed to wrath and ruin; and by baptism are brought into the "covenant of grace," and redeemed from this wrath. But we do not regret that our Protestant Pedobaptist brethren are apostatizing from the faith of their fathers in this regard; and we expect

that, having surrendered the doctrine of the rite, they will soon give up the rite altogether.

SECTION 3.

The nature of baptism renders it impossible for babes to be baptized.

The books on theology call baptism a "sacrament." A Pedobaptist author of note says, "The word sacrament is derived from the Latin word '*sacramentum*,' which signifies an *oath*, particularly the oath taken by soldiers to be true to their country and general."

This is what the Scriptures represent baptism to be. Believers are commanded to be "baptized *into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*" We follow nearly all commentators in translating *eis*, in the commission, *into*; rather than *in*, as in the common version. Every Greek scholar knows that *eis*, with the accusative, *denotes* penetration, entrance *into*. So, the candidate is baptized "*into the name of the Father,*" &c. The *name* of a governor is the same as his authority, his official power. God sets up a kingdom, and claims service, obedience, loyalty in the gospel. He calls upon all men to become citizens and "soldiers of the cross." Keeping this in mind, we see plainly how it is, that we are baptized "*into the*

name of the Father," &c., and why baptism was called a "sacrament" by the early Christians. It is a formal entrance *into* the service of the King, it is the oath of allegiance, a pledge of loyalty, a vow of fidelity, by which the party binds himself to serve, obey, revere, and honor God, by walking in all of the institutions of the gospel blameless. So we read, Rom. 6 : 3, "*baptized into Jesus Christ,*" and Gal. 3 : 27, "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*" As the oath of allegiance introduces the alien *into* the privileges of citizenship, and binds him to loyalty to the government, as the marriage vow introduces the woman *into* the name, fortune, honors, destiny of the husband ; so by baptism, the subjects enter formally *into* the responsibilities of citizens of Christ's kingdom, pledge fidelity to Christ as the bride of the Lamb, and devotion to his honor and cause. This is the meaning, the object and design of Christian baptism. If the party is not baptized "*into Christ,*" he has not observed *Christian* baptism.

But an unconscious babe can not be baptized "*into Christ,*" because he cannot vow fidelity, cannot pledge loyalty. In order to this there must be faith. No person can come into the name of God if he does not know him and believe on him. The Holy Spirit says, Heb. 11 : 6, "He that cometh to

God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him." An unconscious babe *cannot believe*, and hence cannot come to God, cannot enter into his name, cannot be baptized into his name, can know nothing about God, and can enter into no covenant with him, nor can he make any vows to him.

Baptism is not, like circumcision, a mark of pedigree, a seal of national descent, a mere physical affair, but it is the act of the candidate as well as the administrator, a covenant in which the subject must be intelligent and active. We have a divinely authorized definition of baptism, which settles this question beyond dispute. 1 Pet. 3 : 21, "Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God." This is what God says baptism is. This definition is plain, concise, complete, and agrees with the doctrine of the commission, and all other scriptural allusions to the meaning of the rite. Let us consider this inspired definition. It does not assert that baptism is designed to *satisfy our* conscience, fancy, prejudice, education, or superstition. Those who thus interpret it, are very inattentive to the sense of words. "Answer" is seldom used in the sense of *satisfy*, and certainly is not so used here. An answer is a *response* to a question or proposition, a reply back to one who addresses us. "The answer

of a good conscience" is the response or reply of a man who has such a conscience, to the Lord, who submits a proposition, and makes a demand that he should serve and obey him. The Spirit cuts off all chance for mistake here, for he says that "it is the answer of a good conscience *toward God*," a reply or response *to God*, not to ourselves, not to man, not to the church, not to custom, feelings, traditions, but *to God*, and to him alone.

According to God's definition then, baptism is not something done to a passive, unconscious subject. The candidate is necessarily active in it. It is *his* answer to God, his own vow, his own response of loyalty. It cannot be the response of any other than an active, intelligent agent. It is preposterous that any other character can make this response. An unconscious babe cannot respond to God, cannot know God, cannot accept of God's service. Therefore its baptism is *impossible*.

Moreover, baptism is the response of a *good conscience*. But a *good conscience* is an active one, and an honest and approving one. This is essential to the act. Where there is no conscience, or where there is a wicked or guilty one, there can be no Christian baptism. There may be immersion, or sprinkling, or pouring, but no Christian baptism without a *conscience*, and a *good conscience*. Now

a little babe has no conscience. He cannot have one until he has intelligence. Without this, there can be no conscience of duty, obligation, sin, nor repentance. Therefore Christian baptism is impossible to a babe. The "good conscience" cannot respond to God until it exists; it cannot exist without intelligence, and as the babe has no intelligence he cannot render the response.

No more is Christian baptism possible to a sinner. He may be immersed a score of times—the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit may be called over him by a minister of Christ, but his immersion is not therefore Christian baptism. How can he render the response of a "good conscience" when he has a guilty one? Is the *form* of prayer real Christian prayer? Are words on the lips of him whose heart is far from God, Christian prayer? Must there not be *devotion* of heart, the *answer* of the soul, as well as words, to constitute prayer? So the *form* of baptism is not baptism. There must be the response of a consecrated heart, as well as the *form* of the act. Hence there can be no baptism where there is not first a "good conscience."

According to God's word the following elements are absolutely essential to Christian baptism:

1. The party must do the act which the law specifies.
2. He must have a conscience of right and wrong.

3. His conscience must be good, i. e., not guilty, not rebellious, not in bondage to sin.

4. With such a "good conscience" he must respond in the required act to God, must use this form as the medium for his answer to God's claims upon him.

Now it is utterly impossible for an unconscious babe to comply with any one of these essential conditions of Christian baptism. He is as incapable of the formal act as he is of the form of prayer; he has no conscience of right and wrong; he can have no good conscience; he cannot know God, consider a proposition from him, nor respond to his claims. He cannot be baptized any more than he can pray. It is just as rational, scriptural, and truthful for the parents of a babe to pray, and call it the babe's prayer, as to pretend to baptize him when he is incapable of the first idea essential to the act. When he can answer to God from a "good conscience," baptism will be possible to him, and not before.

Is there any other Christian baptism than this which God has defined? Is there a baptism that is not "into Christ," that is not the "putting on of Christ," that is not the "response of a good conscience?" Does the gospel institute a baptism radically different from this? A baptism that involves no intelligence, no faith, no conscience, no

knowledge of God, no consecration to him? It certainly does, if it authorizes the baptism of babes, for that rite differs from the one which God defines, in every particular. But there is but "one Lord, one faith, and *one baptism.*" This baptism an infant babe never did observe, never can observe. It is wholly impossible to him. He never can respond to God in this rite. There is not skill nor power enough in the whole papal church to baptize a babe. All of the wisdom and power of Protestantism is wholly inadequate to this task. *The deed cannot be done.* To talk about doing it is to ignore the Divine account of the rite. To attempt to practice it is to undertake the subversion of God's well defined institutions.

SECTION 4.

Pedobaptists are not agreed among themselves upon the authority for infant baptism.

If Christians should differ in opinion as to the design of baptism, it would not be strange. But for those who practice a positive institution to disagree as to where, how, and when it is authorized, proves at least that it rests upon a very dubious and uncertain basis. It is a singular state of things when the defenders of a positive rite reject, in turn, every argument that is urged in support of it, so that not one is left that is not condemned as un-

sound, fallacious, and irrelevant, by some of the most learned of its patrons. But so it is with infant baptism.

Some find authority for it in the law of circumcision ; while others, equally learned, concede that no support can be derived from that source. Some go to the commission for it, and others assert that it is not authorized there. Some infer it from the words of Christ: "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not," but others say that the inference is fallacious. Some rely upon "household" baptisms for authority, while others find no proof here, since no mention is made of infants, and the probabilities are that none were in the families baptized. Many concede that there is no Scriptural authority for it; but contend that it is right and lawful because it is the natural development of the spirit of Christianity. Neander, the learned expositor and church historian, says, Church History, Vol. 1, page 311, "We have all reason for not deriving infant baptism from apostolic institution; and the recognition of it which followed somewhat later, as an apostolic *tradition*, serves to confirm this hypothesis. Irenæus is the first church teacher in whom we find any allusion to infant baptism, and in his mode of expressing himself on the subject, he leads us at the same time to recognize its connection with the essence of the Christian con-

sciousness; he testifies to the profound Christian idea out of which infant baptism arose, and which produced for it at length universal recognition."

With Neander agree many of the most learned Pedobaptists, that this rite did not arise from Scriptural law, but sprung from "a profound Christian idea," "the essence of the Christian consciousness," i. e., it grew up, was developed, like other papal rites.

Dr. Knapp, the learned theologian, says, *Theology*, page 494, on infant baptism: "There is no decisive example of this practice in the New Testament." "There is therefore no express command for infant baptism in the New Testament, as Marus (page 215) justly concedes."

In these statements many of the ablest scholars among the Pedobaptists agree. And the Papists, from whom the baptism of infants was copied by the Protestant sects, frankly confess that *tradition* is the only conclusive authority for this rite. Bishop Kendrick, of the Papal church, in his work on baptism, says: "Without the aid of tradition, the practice of baptizing infants cannot be satisfactorily vindicated; the scriptural proof on this point not being thoroughly conclusive."

Wherefore this confusion and contradiction among the patrons of this rite? Why does one reject what another affirms to be valid proof for

the practice? Why is there not *one* argument, or Scripture, which is not condemned as inconclusive by these friends of the rite? Some of them say that the law of circumcision is not applicable. We believe it, and therefore reject it. Many of their learned men concede that neither the commission, nor household baptisms, nor any other Scripture, definitely authorizes it. We believe them, and therefore do not rely upon Scripture proof where there is none. Many say that tradition is not a valid warrant for the rite. We believe it, and therefore reject this Papal basis for the rite. Thus, under their own instruction, we are warned against the whole system, and assured that the foundations of the practice are sandy, unsafe, fallacious, and unscriptural. Hence we reject the arguments and the rite, and cleave to the Word of God as our only safe guide. We are satisfied that if there was a good and true foundation for infant baptism, its advocates could find it; it would certainly be sufficiently plain and conclusive, so that they could see it and be agreed upon it, so that those who are anxious to find solid arguments in support of it, would not be obliged to condemn those presented as fallacious. Those who are opposed to the rite might be over critical, and not see the full force of the arguments urged, but if there is logic in them, if they have real force, if they are valid, surely all

those who believe the rite to be valid, and desire conclusive arguments in support of it, would be agreed in them. But they are not. There is not an argument that is urged in support of it but that many of the ablest of the friends of the rite confess to be inconclusive. Its own partial friends see the unsoundness of the foundation upon which it rests, and confess it. According to its most ardent supporters its authority is very questionable. Their disagreement, concessions, and doubts, constitute an emphatic verdict against infant baptism, and force the conclusion upon us, that it is a human rite, a Papal tradition, a matter of "will-worship," and therefore not allowable, not lawful, to those who take the Word of God for their guide in religious matters. If it was not so, these learned men, who have devoted so much time and labor to defend the rite, would long since have agreed upon some line of argument, some reliable testimony, some satisfactory defence of their cherished practice. They have given time, talents, learning enough to the work to have completed the task, and forever settled the question, if it was possible to do it. There has been no lack of ability and labor on their part, but the result thus far has been confusion, contradiction, mutual destruction, fatal concessions, and disagreement. The reason is obvious. Infant baptism is not of God, there is no Scripture

for it, it is a usurpation of man's, supported only by assumptions and fallacies.

SECTION 5.

Infant baptism is a violation of the spirit and polity of the New Covenant, under which we live.

There are two covenants, the *old* and the *new*. Pedobaptists make great efforts to prove that we are still under the old Abrahamic covenant, and that fleshly generation, natural birth, is still a condition of membership. This is precisely the spirit of those Judaizers against whom Paul arrayed his tremendous logic, and his apostolic authority. They claimed peculiar privileges because of their natural descent from Abraham. But Paul rebukes them. Gal. 3: 3, "Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Pedobaptists contend for this old fleshly element, and are determined to drag the old consideration of birth, of natural parentage, into the polity of the new covenant. They argue that God had a church under the old covenant, conferred spiritual blessings, and did a great many good things through this covenant, all of which we fully believe. But we are not to be deceived by the fallacy that God must always confer the same blessings, through the same channel, or covenant, or on the same conditions. In many respects the old covenant and the new

may agree, but it does not, therefore, follow that they agree in all respects. But the fact that there are *two* covenants or administrations implies that there is a *difference* between them. Else why have two at all? Now the chief point of difference between the two is this: the *old* is *fleshly*, the *new* is *spiritual*, i. e., the *old* makes natural birth a condition of blessings, privileges, and immunities, both temporal and spiritual, while under the *new* the flesh, birth, or parentage of the party is not considered. There is no Jew nor Greek, no male nor female, no bond nor free, as such, in this covenant. Every human being stands upon a level, and all are eligible to the same blessings on the same spiritual conditions. But Pedobaptists would destroy this peculiarity of the new covenant and perpetuate the fleshly distinctions of the old. They claim that we are still under the old covenant. Let us see what God says about this.

The old covenant began to be organized in Abraham, and was filled out by Moses. The Abrahamic and Mosaic covenant are one and the same. So Christ understood it. John 7: 22, 23. "Moses, therefore, gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye an-

gry with me because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?" Thus the Saviour regarded circumcision as a part of the Mosaic institution, and so absolutely such that obedience to the law of circumcision was obedience to Moses, and to neglect this rite was to break the law of Moses. Hence the covenant made with Abraham was filled out by Moses, and this constituted *one covenant*, called the "old covenant," "the law," "the covenant of circumcision," "fleshly covenant," "carnal commandment," &c.

Paul regarded circumcision as a part of the Mosaic dispensation, thus making the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenant one and the same. Gal. 5 : 2, 3. "Behold I Paul say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing, for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is debtor to do the whole law." If circumcision bound the party to keep the whole law, then it must have been a part of the same institution, the law was but the filling out of the covenant made with Abraham, the first act for the organization of which was circumcision. This, then, is the old covenant.

Now, the new covenant cannot be older than the old one; it must have been constituted *since* that was. God declared by his prophets that he would make a new covenant with the people. Jer. 31 : 31—34. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,

that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers," &c. So there was to be a *new* covenant, and a *different* one made. We read of only two covenants, and these the Lord represents as *old* and *new*, and as differing in some marked peculiarities.

When did this new covenant come in force? Heb. 8 : 6. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Heb. 9 : 16, 17. "For where a testament (covenant) is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." The Saviour was mediator of the new covenant, which God said should be made, and this covenant came in force when the Lord was crucified.

And what became of the old covenant then? Does that continue in force? Heb. 8 : 13. "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away." 7 : 18. "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." Col. 2 : 14. "He . . . having forgiven you all trespasses, blotting out the handwriting of or-

dinances which was against us, which was contrary to us, *and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.*"

The case is plain. The old covenant was "*disannulled*," "*taken out of the way*," "*vanished away*," "*nailed to the cross*," when the new covenant came into force. So there was but one covenant in force at the same time.

In Gal. 4: 21—31, Paul states this by an allegory: "Abraham had two sons, one by a bond-woman, and the other by a free-woman"—the bond-woman and her son represent the old covenant and those under it; the free-woman and her son represent "Jerusalem which is above," the new covenant, and those under it. Now what is done with this old, fleshly covenant, and those who were under it? 30. "Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? *Cast out the bond-woman and her son*," cast out, annul the old covenant, and the privilege of those under it, "*for the son of the bond-woman.*" those who are born into the old covenant, "*shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman*," shall not come into the new covenant by virtue of their membership in the old. What can be plainer? What can be more positive than this? The old covenant of circumcision is repealed. But we are assured that the new covenant is better than the old. Heb. 8: 7, "which was established upon bet-

ter promises.” : 8, 9. “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold the days come saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers.” In what does this superiority consist? : 10. “For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days saith the Lord ; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.” Here is the difference then. Under the old covenant, *birth, natural generation*, introduced persons into its privileges. But here, all who come in must be taught, understand, believe, choose the service of Christ. The law is to be *written in the heart*, in the intelligence and affections, rather than in the flesh. Disciples are to be made by preaching, converting, instructing, dealing with the mind, rather than with natural birth. All who believe, whatever their birth, can come in ; all who do not believe are excluded. But Pedobaptists say, “That believers and their children are included in this covenant.” They would have it read, “I will put my law into the minds of some, and some shall come in through natural generation.” Instead of having it read, “*not* according to the covenant I made with the fathers,” they would change it, and leave out *not*, and give us a covenant *like* the old one. But God’s plan is, to have the

law intelligently received by all as a condition of discipleship, and to make no account of the flesh.

And what will be the consequences of this new arrangement? "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord," as they are obliged to under a fleshly covenant, for when people come in by natural generation, we are likely to have those in the covenant who do not know God, who are infidels, or idolaters, or profane persons. This was the case under the old covenant, and is so in those churches that baptize babes, and bring them into the church, making birth a condition of entrance. But when faith and repentance, and an intelligent acceptance of Christ is required, we need not say to a member of the kingdom, "Know the Lord," "for all shall know him from the *least* to the *greatest*." There shall be no "*little ones*" who do not know anything of God, nor shall there be *adults*, who have not faith, since no one can enter this new and better covenant, without first getting the law into the mind and heart, by the means which Christ has appointed. This is the peculiarity of the new covenant, which contrasts with the old. The carnal, fleshly element is excluded, and all is spiritual; the state of the mind is considered, and "no confidence is placed in the flesh."

Let it not be forgotten that the old fleshly cove-

nant is done away, that God has not decreed "that the bond-woman and her son shall not be heir with the free-woman," the carnal element of the old covenant is not repeated in the new; here all is spiritual, rational, depending upon truth, and the action of the intelligence, all is spiritual.

Now, then, the attempt to bring unconscious babes into this covenant, that cannot know God, and are certain to grow up in sin, and rebel against him, to make birth a consideration for baptism, to take the *natural* born of believers and claim for them the right of membership in the covenant by virtue of this *natural birth*, is to subvert this characteristic feature of the gospel, mar its spirituality, drag the carnal features of the old covenant into the new, and instead of having a covenant *not* like the old, we are burdened with the rejected features of the old, and the covenant is filled with those who do not know the Lord, and those who, having grown up in sin, will not obey him. The theory of infant baptism is directly and positively opposed to the spirit of the gospel, and its practice had well nigh ruined the Christian cause by bringing in wicked materials into the church and destroying the distinctions between "one who knows God and one who knows him not." It is the doctrine of Christ that none but believers, who know God and have his law in their hearts, can be members of his new

church. But it is the doctrine of infant baptism that "believers and their children" are members of this church.

The gospel allows none to come into the church who do not know God. Pedobaptism brings in thousands who cannot know him, and thousands who hate him. The gospel disregards birth, or any carnal relation, in judging of the qualifications of candidates for church membership. Pedobaptism makes birth and carnal relations the chief object of consideration.

Christ has repealed the old fleshly covenant, and has given us a new, spiritual one. Pedobaptism refuses to submit to the decree of Christ, but clings to the old fleshly institution, and claims that we still live under the old covenant.

Christ makes reason and voluntary choice indispensable conditions of discipleship. Pedobaptism discards reason and choice, and presumes to make disciples without either.

Christ commands his ministers to convert the people, and then baptize them. Pedobaptism reverses this law of Christ, and baptizes those who cannot be converted, and denies baptism to those who are converted, if they have been sprinkled in infancy.

In every feature, aspect, and doctrine of infant baptism, it is subversive of the gospel, a violation

of its spirit and letter, and condemned by the entire scheme and policy of the new covenant.

We might here rest our case, and leave the varied arguments in favor of infant baptism without any farther notice. Indeed, it seems almost superfluous to reply to arguments which many of the most learned Pedobaptists themselves declare to be fallacious. But we have no others to reply to, and out of deference to our opponents, perhaps we ought to give a little more attention to their arguments.

SECTION 6.

We will notice some of their more specious arguments.

I. The one that is relied upon the most, because it is capable of more ambiguity than any other hypothesis, is the *covenant of circumcision*. It is claimed that we live under this covenant, that the covenant of circumcision, and the new covenant, are identical; and that baptism came in the place of circumcision. Babes were circumcised, and hence babes ought to be baptized. That this assumption cannot be true, appears certain.

1. Because the covenant of circumcision, and the new covenant, are *not the same*. The new covenant did not come into force until Christ was crucified. Heb. 9 : 16. And a long time after the

covenant of circumcision was made, God said : " The days come when I will make a new covenant." Jer. 31 : 31. Heb. 8 : 8.

2. Because the new covenant is not like the old, Heb. 8 : 9, and therefore its ordinances are more likely to be different from the old than to be like them.

3. Circumcision belonged to the old covenant, which was fleshly, confined to the Jews, and political as well as spiritual. Baptism belongs to the new, spiritual covenant, where birth and flesh relations are not considered. Therefore it is entirely improbable that baptism should be administered according to the law for administering circumcision. How can the rite, in one covenant, be any guide to the observance of a rite under a new and *different* covenant? Can baptism have come in the place of circumcision, when it is not in the same covenant?

4. Neither Christ nor the apostles even hinted that baptism came in the place of circumcision, or that it served the same mission. Circumcision was often discussed, but in no instance is it said that the apostles pacified the clamor of the Jews for circumcision by assuring them that they had the same thing in baptism. If it was so, why did they not say so?

5. *Sex and parentage* were the specified qualifications for circumcision. Males only could be cir-

cumcised. All sons of Hebrews must be circumcised. But *character*, not sex or birth, is the qualification for baptism. There is not a hint that any one could be baptized, on account of fleshly connection. Hence baptism and circumcision are wholly unlike each other, and baptism did not therefore come in the place of circumcision.

6. Adult males circumcised themselves. Is this the law of baptism?

7. Faith, in adults, was never made a condition of circumcision. How is it in baptism? Is baptism the same as circumcision?

8. Neither faith nor piety was necessary on the part of the parent to entitle his child to circumcision. It was only necessary that he be a Jew. Is this like the law of baptism?

9. Circumcision was never administered in the name of Deity. But baptism is to be administered into the name of the Father, Son and Spirit. So they are radically different rites.

10. Circumcision bound the party to keep the Mosaic law. But baptism does no such thing.

11. All who were circumcised, were invariably commanded by the apostles to be baptized when they believed. This would not have been done, had baptism come in the place of circumcision. Baptism would have been administered only to

Gentiles, and to babes born in the church, if Pedo-baptist notions are true.

12. Those who were circumcised and attempted to live up to its obligations, Paul says are "fallen from grace." Is this the case with those who are baptized?

13. Circumcision was a national badge, a sign or proof that the party was a Jew. But baptism indicated nothing in respect to nationality, birth or worldly relations. Faith in Christ is the language of baptism.

14. Baptism is the "response of a good conscience toward God," but circumcision is nothing of the kind.

The fact is, no two rites could be more unlike each other in nature, form, and object, than baptism and circumcision.

II. But it is claimed that Paul represents all believers as the children of Abraham, and therefore in the same covenant with him, and entitled to the same privileges. Yes, indeed. But how are they children? Because they "walk in the steps of Abraham," and "have faith in God;" not because they are in the same covenant; for this is never intimated. Abraham was a noted example of faith, so that he is called the father of all that believe. But is it said that he is also a father to their chil-

dren? That his fatherly relations cover the natural and fleshly, as well as the spiritual? Because he is said to be a father to believers, in the sense of an example and type of faith, it is folly to assume that this includes the natural seed of believers, and brings *them* into the same relation to Abraham that his natural descendants occupied as members of the old covenant.

III. "Christ called little children to him and blessed them." True. But did he baptize them? If he or his disciples had been accustomed to baptize babes, or if John had baptized them, would the disciples have objected to their being brought? This case stands against infant baptism.

IV. Many families were baptized, and it is thought that they must have contained children. Did Lydia have children? Did she have a husband? She was a merchant, away from home; did she have babes along with her? Her household was composed of brethren. After Paul got out of prison, he went to the house of Lydia, Acts 16 : 40, "and when he had strengthened the brethren, he departed." Did the jailer have babes? Acts 16 : 34, "He rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." *They all believed.* Were there any households baptized when they did not all believe? There is not a shadow of proof

that there was. Indeed, the proof is, that they all believed.

V. It is claimed that infants were baptized as early as two hundred years after Christ, and hence their baptism must have been authorized by the apostles.

If it was authorized by the apostles, why is there no mention of their baptism during the days of the apostles? The baptism of believers is often mentioned; why is there nothing said of baptizing babes? The apostles were setting up new institutions, and would be very certain during the sixty years of their labors, to mention this rite, if it had been practiced.

Our Pedobaptist brethren *imagine* that there were infants baptized. They guess, and presume, and imagine, and say it was reasonable to expect it; that the early Christians would have made a great ado, if their babes had been excluded; that perfect silence about their baptism is proof that they were baptized; that it don't need any authority for it; that Christian parents desire to baptize them, and therefore the early Christians did do it; but after all of this poetry and surmising, not a word, a hint, or allusion, can be found that creates a probability that a babe was ever baptized during the apostolic period.

Moreover, there is not an intimation in all of

the writings of the church teachers and historians, for two hundred years after Christ, that infant baptism was ever thought of. Much is written of the baptism of believers ; much is said of children, of their education, of catechising them, of training them for a Christian life, and of their salvation. *But not a word is said of their being baptized.* We defy any man to present the first word or sentence from the writings of any of the fathers for *two hundred years* after Christ, that affirms or implies infant baptism. Our friends are great on imagining, they fancy that they find babes, where no unprejudiced or unexcited man can discover the remotest sign of them. But it is a terrible trial, even for their excited imaginations, to find any infants at the baptismal font for two hundred years after Christ. None but the most excited and visionary among *them*, can discover any such thing. All the more sober and candid among the Pedobaptists admit that not a case of infant baptism can be found in the early church during this long period.

But as specimens of warped vision and vivid imagination, we will notice the two cases, where some suppose that infant baptism is referred to. The first is found in the First Apology of Justin Martyr, A. D., 140 :

“Several persons among us of sixty or sev-

enty years old, and of both sexes, and who were disciples to Christ in their childhood, do continue uncorrupted."

Who but an enthusiast would suppose that this reference to children implies the baptism of babes? They were disciples from childhood; thousands have believed in childhood, but none in infancy.

In Justin Martyr's 2d Apology, this is fully explained:

"I declare unto you how we offer up ourselves to God after that we are received by Christ. Those of us instructed in the faith, are *brought to the water*, then they are baptized therein, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Then we bring the person thus baptized, or washed, to the brethren, where the assemblies are, that we may pray both for ourselves and the newly illuminated person; that we may be found by doctrine and good works, worthy observers and keepers of the commandments."

Thus they were first instructed, and then taken out to the *water*, (the water was not brought to them), and baptized. All children were first catechised, and when properly instructed, they were baptized.

But it is claimed that *Irenæus* made *express*

mention of the baptism of babes. The passage quoted reads as follows :

“ Christ came to save all by himself; all, I say, who through him *are regenerated to God (renascuntur in Deum)*; infants, little children, boys, young people and old.”

Not a word is said of baptism in the quotation, nor in the context. It is *salvation*, not baptism, that *Irenæus* is speaking of; and he tells us that Christ saves infants. Who denies it, except those who teach the Papal doctrine, that infants can only be saved by baptism? Of course Christ saves infants. Thousands of Baptists have stated that; but in doing so, they had no idea of teaching that infants should be baptized in order to secure this blessing.

The first writer that speaks of infant baptism, is Tertullian, in the 3d century, and *he speaks decidedly against it*. Before him, not a writer gives us the remotest intimation that this rite was ever thought of; not a case occurs of its being practiced; during this whole period, the entire church are as silent as death upon the subject. Is it not a most unparalleled instance of sectarian enthusiasm, to attempt to prove that infant baptism was practiced in the early church, when, for more than two hundred years from the Christian era, no man,

orthodox or heterodox, even so much as mentioned the thing? Is it possible that this practice was in general use, and no man, friend or foe, of hundreds of writers, for more than two hundred years, drop one syllable about it? We fearlessly affirm, that no man living, can present a single passage from the writers of this period, where this practice is mentioned or implied.

But long before this, *other* gross errors had obtained in the church; such as *penance*, auricular confession, and celibacy. Even Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Ignatius, commend celibacy as worthy of hearty encouragement. Ignatius says :

“If any one be able to abide in purity, (celibacy), in honor of the Lord’s flesh, let him do so without boasting. If he boast, he is lost; or if he consider himself on that account to be more than a bishop, he perishes.”

Tertullian advocates celibacy. He says :

“The command, increase and multiply, is abolished. Yet, as I think, this command, in the first instance, and now the removal of it, are from one and the same God.”

Infant baptism grew up among these errors, and came into use gradually, as the church became more and more corrupt. But infant communion began to be practiced at the same time, and both baptism

and the supper were supposed to have power to cast out the evil spirits, and regenerate the infant as well as the adult.

Tertullian justifies celibacy, penance, &c., on the same theory that many of the learned Pedobaptists justify infant baptism; as the *growth* of Christian culture; the fruit of the spirit of Christianity; the product of "a profound Christian consciousness." He says:

"Scripture is of God, nature is of God, discipline is of God, and whatever contradicts these is not of God. If in any case Scripture be ambiguous, nature is indubitable, and sustained by its testimony, Scripture cannot be uncertain; or if there were yet any doubt concerning the evidences of nature, *the discipline, the usage of the churches*, which is more directly authenticated by God, shows the way."

Tradition, the usage of the churches, discipline, "*more directly authenticated by God!*" This doctrine is the parent of infant baptism, and the whole tribe of Papal errors. This practice did not "grow out of a profound *Christian* consciousness," but out of heathen notions of sin, and the means of redemption. They held that sin was a virus born into the constitution of man, and that it might be excluded by incantations, penance, bodily inflictions and ceremonies. And hence they thought

they could cast out the evil spirit by baptism and the supper, with other rites copied from the heathen.

SECTION 7.

Conclusion.

We have proved in the preceding discussion:—

1. That believers only are commanded to be baptized, and that ministers of the gospel have no command to baptize any others. If they do baptize them, they usurp authority, infringe upon the prerogatives of God, use the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit unlawfully.

2. We have proved that by specifying and describing the *character* of those to be baptized, the law of Christ does positively forbid the baptism of all who do not possess this character. Infants cannot possess it, and therefore are excluded from the rite. It is therefore just as unlawful to baptize a babe, as to baptize an infidel; or to baptize bells, robes, altars, and utensils of Papal worship in the name of Deity.

3. We have proved that it is utterly impossible for a babe to receive Christian baptism; since the Spirit says, that “baptism is the response of a good conscience toward God;” and it is not possible for babes to have a good conscience, to know anything of God, nor to respond to him. Hence

all the ministers in creation cannot administer *Christian baptism* to an unconscious babe.

4. We have shown that every theory, argument, and speculation in support of infant baptism, is, in turn, condemned and rejected by the most learned among the Pedobaptists themselves, as fallacious, inconclusive, illogical and untrue. If the friends of this practice issue verdict against the arguments of their own brethren, in support of it, it must be because the arguments are really unsound. What they reject, we reject, and there is nothing left but a bare assumption, a bold tradition.

5. We have proved that infant baptism, by bringing in a fleshly element, violates the spirit and letter of the new covenant, which is spiritual; and admits no one to its privileges in consideration of birth, or carnal relations; but makes teaching and conversion the invariable law of introduction to its blessings. The fleshly element belonged to the old covenant, but is positively opposed to the spirit of the new and better covenant.

6. We have shown the fallacy of the arguments and assumptions which are urged in support of this practice; and proved that there is not a hint or allusion to infant baptism during the entire ministry of the apostles, and for more than two hundred years after the Christian era.

In looking over the speculations of the defenders

of infant baptism, we are astonished and pained at the irrational and forced interpretations of Scripture, and desperate expedients to which they resort in support of their dogma. They are doing more to unsettle the minds of the people in the testimony of Scripture than all the skeptics in the land. Upon their principles of interpretation, there is not a doctrine of Papacy, of heathenism, or Christianity, but that can be *proved*, and *disproved*, by the Bible. The legitimate tendency of this course is to mystify and confuse the minds of the people in regard to Christianity, and finally drive many into total darkness and unbelief.

The mission of infant baptism has been full of evil. It has carnalized the new and spiritual covenant; it has brought corrupt and unconverted men into the church; it has perverted the ideas of sin, and the conditions of salvation, and begotten millions of false hopes; it has made the church a political hierarchy, directed by men who have grown up in it, and were destitute of the spirit of Christ; it has given birth to many bloody persecutions, murders and robberies for matters of religious faith; and those who have practiced this rite, stand alone in the shame of persecution; as those who rejected infant baptism have never been known to persecute, but have always been advocates of freedom of conscience; it has done away

with believers' baptism, repealed the law of Christ, and substituted the baptism of unconscious babes ; it has usurped the prerogatives of God, and created an ordinance which God never made ; it has fought against the word of God, and plead for tradition in its place ; it has always been an enemy to a fair, frank, straight-forward interpretation of the Scriptures, and has practiced a false and dangerous policy of interpretation ; it has always been an enemy to a pure Christianity, a pure church and gospel order, and denies to man the right to read, hear, believe, and practice for himself.

A large volume could scarcely narrate the many evils that have grown out of this practice. And as we love the gospel, love truth, and dislike error with all its consequences, we pray and labor that this carnal institution may be done away, and never more disturb the peace and prosperity of Christ's church on earth.







Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

11 Thimble Creek Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
724/779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 479 977 A